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SIPDIS

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TAGS: [MOPS](#) [MARR](#) [PREL](#) [NATO](#) [IZ](#) [LH](#)
SUBJECT: LITHUANIA IN IRAQ: WHERE THEY ARE NOW

REF: VILNIUS 395

Classified By: Ambassador John A. Cloud for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

[11](#). (C) Advisor to the Prime Minister Mindaugas Jurkynas told Ambassador June 10 that President Adamkus and PM Kirkilas are both committed to Lithuanian troops remaining in Iraq past July, despite DefMin Olekas's almost daily, public statements to the contrary. Jurkynas said the State Defense Council will meet the week of June 16 and he predicted it will agree that the deployment in Iraq should be extended until the end of this year. MFA U/S Pavilionis gave Ambassador the same assurance later the same day. An advisor to the President was more measured in his prediction. He acknowledged that was the plan but anticipated that Olekas would push back strongly.

[12](#). (C) Lithuania is starting to look at long term interests in Iraq. MFA's Middle East Division Head Irena Vedrickaite told us June 9 that the GOL is now considering accrediting an Ambassador to Iraq. Vedrickaite predicted this new Ambassador will work from Vilnius because basing him in Baghdad is not yet feasible financially. Another option would be to have the GOL's Ambassador in Cairo assume Iraq duties as well, however Vedrickaite said many in the MFA -- including her division -- will oppose this because this Ambassador is already accredited to six other Arab countries. Vedrickaite said an Ambassadorship to Iraq is "a new item on the agenda" and did not give a timeline as to when someone will be appointed however she did say, "as the security situation gets better, our economic interest will increase."

[13](#). (C) Comment: The Lithuanians are aware that they need a definitive answer on their deployment in Iraq before Prime Minister Kirkilas' scheduled meeting with Vice President Cheney July 2. End comment.
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